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Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council

Thematic cluster III: United Nations offices, peacebuilding support offices, integrated offices and commissions

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the advance version of the report of the Secretary-General on a revision to the proposed resource requirements for 2013 for the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS) (A/67/346/Add.7), included in the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/67/346/Add.3). The additional requirements relate to the reclassification of the level of the position of Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau from that of Assistant Secretary-General to that of Under-Secretary-General. During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification.

2. In paragraph 2 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that, since the military coup d'état of 12 April 2012, the political and security situation in Guinea-Bissau has been steadily deteriorating despite the efforts of national and international stakeholders. He also indicates that the work of the United Nations has changed from assisting with peacebuilding and security sector reform to negotiating a political road map to end the crisis. He further indicates that stakeholders at the national and international levels remain polarized on the legitimacy of the transitional arrangement brokered by the Economic Community of West African

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States and modalities for the restoration of constitutional order. It is in this context that the Secretary-General proposes the upward reclassification of the position of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau in order to attract an individual at the rank of a former Head of State or his or her equivalent, with the standing and respect both locally and internationally to advance the deadlocked political process in this polarized environment.

II. Resource requirements

3. The Secretary-General indicates, in paragraph 5 of his report, that the additional requirements related to the proposed reclassification would amount to $31,700 and would be accommodated within the overall level of budgets for special political missions for the biennium 2012-2013.

4. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Secretary-General had reviewed the roster of available candidates and determined that, at the current level of Assistant Secretary-General, he could not attract the appropriate candidate with the profile described in paragraph 2 above. The Committee was further informed that, should the General Assembly approve the proposed reclassification, another review of existing candidates would be undertaken and a recommendation made to the Secretary-General. The Committee was also informed that in addition to consulting with the Economic Community of West African States, the African Union and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, the Secretary-General would inform the de facto authorities in Guinea-Bissau before informing the Security Council in writing about his selection.

5. **The Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General's proposal for the upward reclassification of the position of Special Representative to the level of Under-Secretary-General is informed by the need to attract a high-profile candidate at the rank of either a former Head of State or the equivalent in order to maximize the chances of achieving a solution to the prevailing stalemate, and the Committee concurs with the Secretary-General's view of the unique challenges presented by the political and security situation in Guinea-Bissau (see S/2012/887, sect. V).** In that regard, the Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the Secretary-General's request did not reflect a standardization of the level of representation in similar positions but was an attempt to address an urgent political problem in Guinea-Bissau.

6. In paragraph 54 (b) of his report on special political missions (A/67/346/Add.3), the Secretary-General indicates that, in 2013, the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau would continue to work in cooperation with the United Nations Office for West Africa in political and administrative and logistic areas such as cost-shared aviation support and addressing the cross-cutting threats of drug trafficking and organized crime. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Heads of the two missions had been working in close collaboration with regard to the regional implications of the conflict in Guinea-Bissau. The Committee was also informed that the greater part of the internal political work in the country was being handled by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau and, notwithstanding the proposed upgrade of the position, the new appointee would continue to rely on the support of the United Nations Office for West Africa in the performance of his or

her duties. **The Advisory Committee encourages the cooperation between the two missions so as to better address issues of regional concern and recommends that the Secretary-General be requested to provide information in the next budgets for special political missions on the division of responsibilities between his Special Representative for West Africa and his Special Representatives associated with the other missions in the region.**

III. Recommendation

7. **Taking into account its comments and observations in the preceding paragraphs, the Advisory Committee has no objection to the Secretary-General's proposal for reclassification.**